**RESEARCH PROPOSAL FRAMEWORK**

The student must obtain the approval of the course coordinator concerning the chosen topic prior to proceeding to the preparation of the proposal. The research proposal stage marks the start of the application of the skills and knowledge the student has acquired during his/her studies; hence it is a very important part of the whole course of study at this level. The dissertation proposal should be 2 – 10 pages.

1. RESEARCH TOPIC/ TITLE

***This is really the title of the study and it should reflect an area of interest to the student which should also possess potential to be researched upon.***

***The title of the research should depict what is defined in the objectives***

1. RESEARCH PROBLEM

***This should be a brief statement of the problem to which the research would like to come up with solutions or answers and it should be stated very clearly.***

Example:

***The high fuel prices on the global markets are causing many non-oil producing country economies to go into a recession but the causes of such oil spikes are still largely unknown. Hence there is a strong need for the factors which are influencing the upward movement in fuel prices to be determined.***

***Research questions should be in question form starting with ‘How’, ‘What’, ‘Which’, ‘When’ and ‘Who’ and ending in a question mark (?). Examples of research questions are:***

1. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

***These are the goals which the research is supposed to attain and there can be one general objective and a number of specific objectives which are derived from the former. Interim hypotheses may or may not be included at this very initial stage in the research.***

Specific Research Objectives:

1. ***To determine the causes of the poor purchasing power among Zambian households.***
2. ***To determine why Zambians in general are getting poorer every day.***
3. ***To identify the ratio of disposable incomes to household requirements in Zambia.***
4. ***To find out why the majority of Zambians do not own titled property***
5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

***The research problem is then broken down into a series of questions concerning the relationship between the cause (independent variable) and the effect (dependent variable).***

Example:

1. ***What could be responsible for the rise in fuel prices on world markets?***
2. ***Why is Zambia economically poor when she is natural resource-rich?***
3. ***How can productivity be increased in the Zambian copper mines?***
4. ***When will the global economy go into a recession?***

***It is recommended that a research study should have one overriding objective which is then broken down into a number of specific objectives. For academic research, a single objective will not normally suffice. For example:***

1. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

***The study scope defines the research boundary.*** ***This should indicate what the research covers and what it does not. It is really the range of the study which should adequately deal with the research problem and resolve it.***

1. INTERIM LITERATURE REVIEW

***This should briefly touch on some initial important aspects of work previously done on the subject area by other scholars.***

1. INTERIM METHODOLOGY

***This should also briefly mention the research methods which the student plans to utilize in her/his investigation, e.g., study design (case, cross- sectional, longitudinal, exploratory, etc.), population, sample size and sampling methodology, data collection (variables, measures/instruments, methods) and data analysis techniques.***

The research methodology should include the following:

1. ***The Research Design***
2. ***The Research Population***
3. ***Sampling Design and Sample Size***
4. ***Data Collection***
5. ***Data Analysis***
6. ***Hypotheses***
7. ***Study Variables (Independent, Dependent, Control)***
8. PROGRAMME OF RESEARCH ACTIVITY

***This is the work plan for the whole research and, for purposes of efficiency and effectiveness, should preferably be in the form of a Gantt chart***